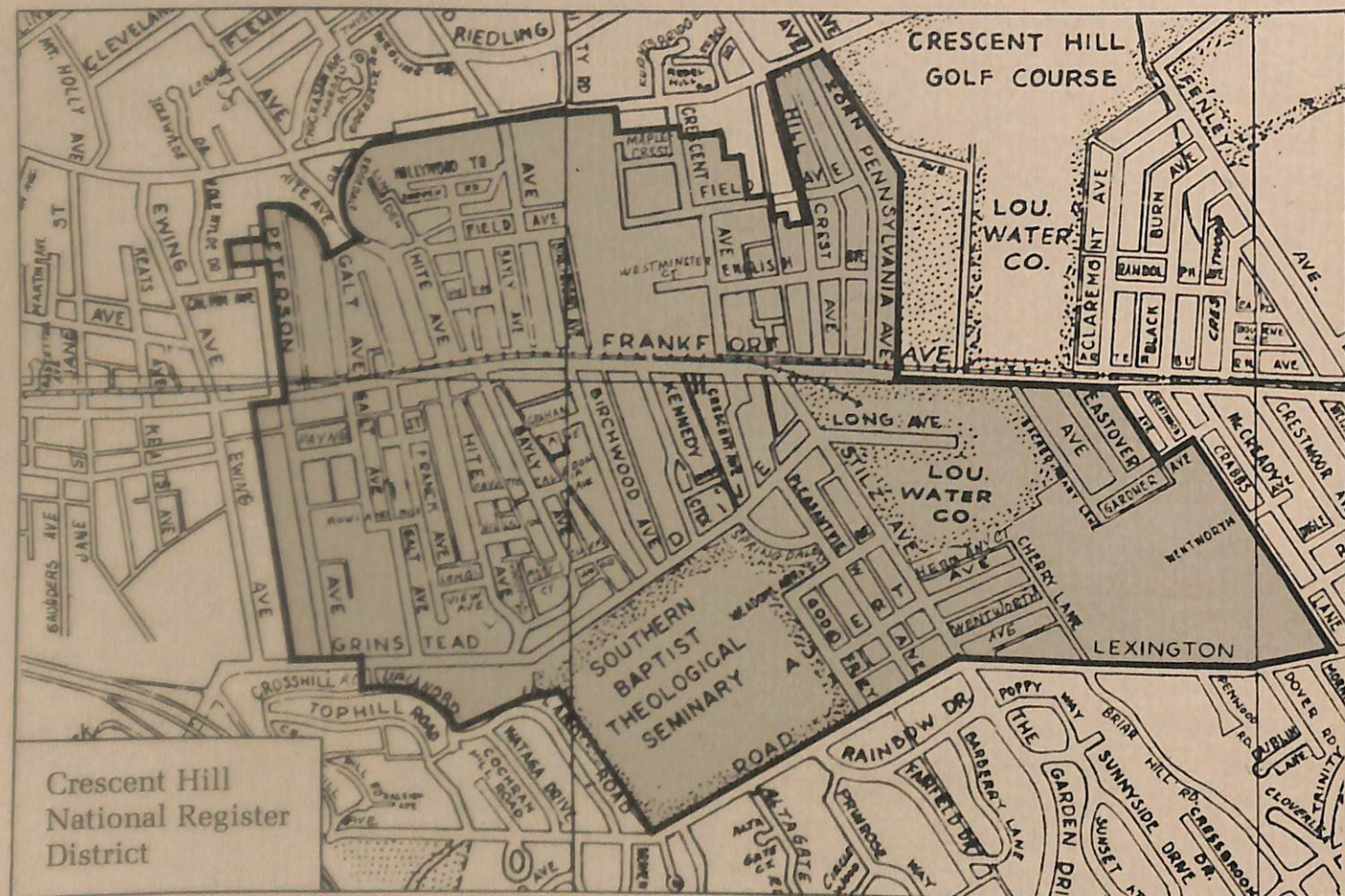




CRESCENT HILL

The significance of Crescent Hill lies in its rich collection of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century domestic architecture and its development as a middle-class railroad suburb of Louisville. The overall ambience of the district is marked by a sylvan character due in part to the presence of a number of institutions on large tracts of land and the gently rolling topography of the area.

The early development of Crescent Hill consisted of summer homes for Louisville residents such as the Peterson-Dumesnil House, the J. T. G. Galt House and the Field House. Denser development followed in the 1880s with the advent of the streetcar line to the area. This facilitated commuting for the middle and working classes. By the turn of the century, professional land developers were marketing the advantages of suburban living.

Architecturally, Crescent Hill is noted for its collection of Craftsman Style residences. The national back-to-nature movement was at its zenith by the time development began in the area. This picturesque yet utilitarian style offered the home buyer all the necessities of comfortable living, including porches and sunrooms for the full enjoyment of the park-like setting of Crescent Hill. Other features of this style included shingling, multi-paned windows, deep overhanging eaves, and wooded or leaded tracery patterns in doors and windows.

Commercial development in Crescent Hill is limited to Frankfort Avenue. Typical vernacular, "mom-and-pop" architecture is most frequently found on the corridor. Frankfort Avenue is also the location of several churches, the library, firehouse, and Masonic Hall—all period buildings which contribute to the character of the district.

Redevelopment of Crescent Hill is lively. The area has never witnessed a significant decline, but many of the large homes have been converted to multi-family use. The investment tax credit has not been widely used in Crescent Hill because most of the renovation that occurs is for owner occupied use, or the renovation does not require substantial rehabilitation. The opportunities for development lie in the commercial property on Frankfort Avenue and in some of the larger properties on Kennedy, Crescent, and Birchwood. Although few non-contributing structures are located in the district, the use of aluminum siding in some of the areas hit by the 1974 tornado has diminished the character of those structures.



The rhythm of these 1920s commercial structures is interrupted by the vertical barn siding applied to the middle structure, which obscures its original storefront design.



The new house on the left, with no decorative character, pales by comparison with the Eastlake-detailed house on the right.